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The office of Mandal is hereditary, within the Lepcha meaning of the term; that is to say that the title resides in the extended family, and when the holder dies or becomes feeble through old age, it is given to the next most suitable male in the family; it often is the holder's eldest son, but may equally well be a younger brother or nephew of the holder. The position is probably older than the Tibetan colonisation of Sikkim, for some of the Mandals of Zongu are the eleventh or twelth of the family line to hold the position. In Lingthem Chala Mandal, the present holder of the title, is the third of his line to hold office; he has been Mandal for twenty years, succeeding his father's younger brother Tasso Nungyen, who in his turn had succeeded his own eldest brother Ogen. Before Ogen the office had been in old Serving's family; but Serving's father Pépo was exceedingly stupid and the only other suitable member of the family was already a lama attached to Talung monastery; therefore the title was taken from his line (the Tsel-telim *ptso*) and transferred to Chala Mandal's (Jam-yong *ptso*). The Tsel-telim *ptso* was originally by far the most powerful in the neighbourhood, but is now almost extinct, owing, it is said, to the *tamtoom* resulting from one ancestor who sold Lepchas as slaves to the Bhutanese.

The Mandal is normally spoken of as the 'landlord' of the village, and the other householders are called his 'tenants.' The Mandal holds the land under the Maharajah, who is the ultimate owner; the householders have the usufruct of the land but cannot transfer it outside their family without the Mandal's consent; for land to be transferred to a stranger from outside the village the permission of the Court is also necessary. The Mandal is responsible to the Court for the maintenance of good order in the village and for the collection of taxes; if there is a deficit he is liable to have to make it up. In relation to the other villagers he stands in the position of an elder relative—father or uncle or elder brother; he arranges the marriages of most of the young people, he looks after everybody's welfare and happiness, giving advice on personal or agricultural matters where they appear needed, and acting as intermediary between the villagers and the Court. It is necessary for the Mandal to be slightly richer than his 'tenants'; he has to entertain all distinguished visitors; he has to look after the orphaned and homeless (Chala Mandal had permanently living in

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622 Chala from accompanying him abroad, explaining that the young man was to be his heir and that he, the 'grandfather,' was getting old and past his work and wanted Chala to help him. The Maharajah granted the request; he put a scarf round Chala's neck and presented him with a coat and length of cloth and gave him a certificate confirming him in the office of Mandal.

Chala Mandal is completely illiterate; he has never learned to read or write; he has, he says, to carry everything, all the accounts and the personal relationships and the long stories he knows and tells 'in his heart and belly.' He must not drink too much *chi* or his memory would go. In a very real way the Mandal has acted as 622 uncle for almost all his tenants, for, in the last twenty years, he has ●584 arranged every marriage except two in the neighbourhood. He does not plan in advance; when he thinks a boy or girl ripe for marriage he looks round for a suitable partner and then makes the suggestion to the child's uncles; if the arrangement is satisfactory to both parties the lamas consult the horoscopes to see if the projected marriage will turn out well and the arrangements are proceeded with. Even today when he is growing old he still has to arrange every marriage, in spite of the long marches which the rôle of *bek-bu*, or marriage arranger, entails. Chala Mandal also regulates most of the private affairs of his villagers, scolding and helping if they are extravagant or quarrelsome, or unco-operative; he is called into consultation and consults others on any affair of moderate importance.

622 With me he pretended to be extremely diffident but was obviously 538 pleased with the respect I paid him; all the visits which we paid one another started out somewhat ceremoniously, though after a few minutes he would settle down and gossip and tell stories happily. He was an extremely good story teller with an astonishing memory; as well as the more serious mythology he would tell comic fables and anecdotes extremely well, mimicking the various voices and actions with most humorous precision; one of my most vivid memories is of him representing a rather foolish female devil consulting the oracle of her pubic hair which waved about in

[43] manner of giving and receiving scarves to indicate the social distance between the two parties.

177 This giving of a scarf and coin, either alone, or with other gifts, has been completely accepted by the Lepchas, and will be found as a constantly recurring theme in sociological payments, such as marriage, and also often in sacrifices to the supernatural.

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582 whom the Mandal was looking after, Takshyom, Kurma's nineteen-year-old nephew, and Kanchok, the seventeen-year-old adopted son of Chelim. Of these three it is possible that Satéo will never be married; if he were hale and able to do his work properly his poverty would not stand in his way; but nobody would want to give their daughter to a poor cripple. In Lingthem there is no suitable unrelated girl; if there were one the Mandal would probably arrange the match. The other two wards are expected to be betrothed shortly, as soon as a suitable partner with a fitting horoscope can be found. Mental defectives are never married, and people with incapacitating physical defects practically never.

583 There are two stages in Lepcha marriage: *aséḱ*, or betrothal, and *bri* or bringing home the bride. *Aséḱ* is actually the validating ceremony at which the formal gifts from the family of the groom to that of the bride are presented; these gifts are called 'the price of the bride' and once they are accepted the groom has full access to his bride and all children born after *aséḱ* are considered as legitimate. But until the large and expensive marriage feast or *bri* has been performed, the wife and, possibly, her children, stay at her father's house save possibly for short visits; and during this period the son-in-law is, as it were, his father-in-law's servant, and has to go and work for him whenever he is summoned and cannot leave without obtaining his permission; he is in a subordinate position, and, though he may be taunted, must never answer back.

584 Marriages are always arranged through the offices of two *bek-bu*, or between-men, one representing each party. In theory any old and experienced man who knows how to make the formal and flowery speeches in *tang-bor* or allusive periphrases[6] can fill this rôle and in other villages there are a number of *bek-bu*; but in Lingthem in the last twenty years in all but two of the sixty marriages which have taken place the Mandal has filled this rôle. In theory the biological parents should have nothing at all to do with their children's marriages; were they to do so either the children would die young or the marriage would break up. All the negotiations concerning a marriage are carried on by the paternal or maternal uncles of the children, preferably a paternal-uncle-older-than-father, or people standing in this relation; but in point of fact the parents are always surreptitiously, and sometimes fairly openly consulted. The demand for marriage is always made in

[6] For further explanations of *tang-bor* and examples see Chapter Ten, p. 265.

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the first place by the boy's *bek-bu*, acting under the uncle's instructions; he visits the girl's village, going to some strange house, and inquires who is the man who will act as the girl's *bek-bu*. The girl's *bek-bu* then acts as intermediary between the boy's *bek-bu* and the girl's 'uncle'.

When a son-in-law is proposed some representative of the girl is always sent to the boy's village to inquire about his character, whether he is peaceful and a good worker; formerly tests of felling wood used to be imposed. Some parents take into account the prospective property of the boy, but personal appearance and the relative age of the two parties are not generally considered. The more pious lamas will only consider lamas as suitable sons-in-law. Care has to be taken that neither party suffers under any hereditary taint.[7]

It usually happens that the boy and girl do not know one another at all before the betrothal; occasionally however a boy and girl who know one another wish to marry; in such cases the boy approaches either his uncle or his *bek-bu* and ask him to enter into negotiations. When widowers with property remarry this is always the case; and usually the man will have already impregnated his wife before the first overtures are made.

There is a distinct tendency for several members of two families or neighbourhoods to marry each other; once one woman from a strange community is brought into a village, she is liable to establish further contacts between members of her old community and those of her new one; and, provided the rules of a descent are not infringed, there is a tendency for a woman's daughters to marry back into their mother's old village. It is quite common for two siblings of one family to marry two siblings of another, whether it be two brothers marrying two sisters, or an exchange of sisters, each brother marrying the sister of the other. The marriage of two people does not affect the subsequent marriages of their families in the same generation in any way, but it is considered preferable for, say, the elder brother of the groom to marry the elder sister of the bride, and the younger, the younger; contrary arrangements are not forbidden, but they involve a readjustment of relationships which is felt to be awkward and uncomfortable, and I never came across nor heard of such an arrangement. In the case of the exchange of daughters the full marriage presents are meant to be given on both sides, and this is nearly always done, though in

[7] See Chapter Five, note 12, p. 139.

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point of fact it comes to an exchange of identical goods. The formal marriage gifts are always meant to be new and unused; and it is a point of honour for all those who can afford to give them to do so.

The length of the period between *asék* and marriage varies between a few weeks and a few years according to the wealth of the people providing the marriage feast. In the case of young people this is entirely provided by their families and does not entail any feeling of indebtedness nor does the expense have to be repaid; it is an absolute gift, a further link in the chain of mutual benefits which bind Lepchas together. This is not the case if men of property wish to marry or re-marry; they have to provide the expense themselves and if they borrow from others they have to repay what they borrow. In the case of poor people who wish to marry there are two possible solutions; from a suitable groom the girl's parents may consent to receive the symbolical gift of a piece of roast meat (*akut*) instead of the proper *asék* presents, which represent a cash value of about Rs. 60; or the Mandal may advise and help the prospective groom to give a feast, at which all the neighbours will contribute in money or kind to pay for the marriage feast. In Lingthem this has been done twice in recent years. The cash value of the gifts, animals and grain demanded by the complete *asék* and marriage ceremonies is computed to be about Rs. 300. By far the greater part of this is involved in the food consumed at the marriage feast.

There is one other potential arrangement by which men without much property or a large family can obtain a wife. In a family where there are no sons it is possible, if the parents so wish, that the groom, instead of taking the daughter away to his home, shall live permanently in the home of his parents-in-law, acting as their son, and eventually inheriting their property; in such cases only small *asék* presents are given and the expense of the lesser marriage feast is borne by the girl's family. But this arrangement is not very popular or very common; people do not much like the idea of having a stranger permanently in the home, and prefer either to adopt a young child, or else to let the property pass at their death to a *ké-tsop*;[8] and for most men the probable permanent separation from their families and friends is undesirable. This resident son-in-law is called *komok myok*. There are two men so situated in Lingthem, Tempa and Kurma *gyapön*, both somewhat maladjusted. Kurma is not a real stranger, for he was

[8] See Chapter Three, p. 106.

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born in the neighbouring village of Panung; the wife to whose house he went is now dead, though her mother is still living there; Kurma is *asék*'d to another woman whom he hopes to bring home in 1938. Besides these two men there are two other men living in Lingthem who were not born there; these are Katel, whose story has already been told, and Takneum *youmi*, who was adopted as a boy by his father's married sister.

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It sometimes happens that after *asék* has been performed the boy and girl feel a really strong repulsion for one another. In many cases a girl will simulate repulsion and will refuse to let her groom sleep with her; but this is thought to be chiefly due to shame and to dislike of having to leave her parents' home; and therefore the young people are cajoled and bribed and threatened and even sometimes beaten to make them like one another. If however the repulsion felt is really strong and there seems no possibility of breaking it down, two solutions are open; either the whole arrangement is called off and the gifts or their equivalents in money returned, or else an alternative spouse, usually a younger brother of the groom and occasionally a younger sister of the bride, is offered instead. The best example of these arrangements can be shown in the history of Rigya. Rigya, who is twenty-two years old, was *asék*'d when he was about fifteen to one girl, but they did not get on at all well together and after a time the Mandal arranged for the marriage payments to be given back. His eldest brother, Aplung, was also *asék*'d to a girl he disliked; he therefore gave her to his youngest brother, Gyatso, who did not want her and ran away to Gangtok to work as a carpenter; thereupon the girl was given to Rigya, who was the middle brother. This is a somewhat irregular arrangement because Gyatso was younger than Rigya; but since Aplung was older she was looked on as being originally the wife of the elder brother and therefore marriageable. Aplung subsequently married a widow, a woman considerably older than himself.

Most consummated marriages are stable and divorce or separation is very rare. The chief cause of divorce is usually for incompatibility of character or refusal to work properly on the part of the wife. If a man sends his wife away he has to pay a fine of Rs. 88 to the girl's father and has to divide with the wife all the movable

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881 through ritual and symbolism men attempt to arrogate to themselves women's physiological functions; perhaps the most striking of these rites is the urethral sub-incision practised by some Australian tribes. Since, unfortunately, nothing is known of the other Mongolian peoples of the Himalayas, it is impossible to state whether this notion is peculiar to the Lepchas, or whether it is shared by their Northern neighbours. The Hindus and the Nepali converts to Hinduism stress overtly the rivalry between the sexes, and adduce the inferiority of women through their magically dangerous and infectious functions of menstruation and child-birth.

886 Just as there is no formally marked beginning of sexual life, so there is no formally marked end of it. The menopause is ignored; the dream of copulation with a supernatural, which marks the menses, is meant to continue after it; and sexual pleasure is considered to be equally strong at any period of life. There appears to be no fear of impotence; sexual appetite and an appetite for food are openly equated, and it is considered that, except through illness or old age, the loss of one is as unlikely as the loss of the other.

833 Some men make a distinction between pre-puberty and post-puberty sexual activity, but this distinction is personal and not cultural. Most men, when talking of their past lives, emphasise what was their first 'real' sexual experience; but some place this first experience very early, at the age of eleven or twelve. I think the operative distinction in the mind of the Lepcha is whether the sexual adventure formed part of a play, or was undertaken seriously for its own sake.

582 584 [833] Lepcha society gives the children a sexual rôle very early; girls are betrothed and occasionally married from the age of eight onwards, and boys from the age of twelve. In Lingthem it seems as though this very early age for betrothal has been somewhat raised in recent years; Mrs. Datoop and one or two other of the elder women in the community were betrothed at the age of eight and married shortly after; but in 1937 there was no betrothed girl aged less than twelve, nor was any young man betrothed to a girl under that age. It is quite probable that this change in the age of betrothal is local and temporary; the Lepchas did not consider that the situation had altered in any way. Even today most young people are betrothed before or at any rate as soon as they arrive at physical puberty, and consequently enter that state with an already selected sexual partner. In 1937 the only unbetrothed girl over thirteen was Prumtu; there were eight boys over sixteen un-

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betrothed, but of these three were mental defectives, one was a cripple, and two were carpenters just returned from the state school at Gangtok ;[1] the remaining two were adopted children, and in both cases the adopting fathers said they were searching for suitable spouses.

Some of the boys and girls may have had a little sporadic sexual experience before betrothal, especially if their elder siblings of the same sex are married ; but it is by no means unusual for both parties to be complete virgins at the time of betrothal. The period between betrothal and marriage is usually the time of greatest sexual adventure and promiscuity ; but this naturally depends on the affection the two betrothed feel for one another and, to a lesser extent, on the distance between their two villages ; a betrothed pair who are fond of one another may quite probably be sexually exclusive ; where they do not get on, and particularly if there is overt hostility, they are likely to look elsewhere.

A marriage is never arranged by the parents of the child concerned ; were the parents to do so either the parties would die young or the marriage would break up. In Lingthem the marriages are usually proposed by the Mandal and negotiated through the intermediary of the child's uncles and grandparents on both sides, and especially the father's elder brother, or if such a man does not exist, anyone who stands in a similar relationship. Thus, in the marriage of Datoop's children, Tafoor acted as the ' father's elder brother ' ; actually Tafoor is nineteen years younger than Datoop and they are four generations removed from a common ancestor (their respective paternal grandmothers were biological sisters) ; Datoop was an only child and Tafoor the most responsible related man of the same generation ; since they are connected by females they are obviously of different *ptso*.

All the real marriage negotiations are carried on between two *bek-bu* (between-men) representing each side. Any experienced and tactful man with the exception of the spouse's father, who knows the correct things to say and the correct way to say them and has a sufficient vocabulary of *tang-bor* may take this rôle ; in Lingthem the Mandal has performed this office for nearly every couple in the last twenty years, but in other villages a variety of people perform this rôle and the choice of *bek-bu* is a personal one dictated by the friendliness of the betrothed person and his family. In by far the greater number of cases the two children to be betrothed do not

[1] See Chapter Four, p. 121, and Chapter Six, p. 153.

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584 know one another at all before betrothal. In a relatively few cases they are near neighbours, in which case the betrothal is more likely to have been arranged at the request of the boy, or the children may have met casually on visits. This is particularly liable to happen when a woman's daughters marry back into their mother's village. Before the actual betrothal visit is made an 'uncle' of the boy may take him on a visit to inspect his future spouse; the boy may be asked if he fancies the girl, but the question is really a formality, for if he says 'No' this reply is usually put down to shame, and the betrothal is proceeded with regularly.

The first preliminary to arranging a marriage is a visit of the *bek-bu* by himself to the girl's village; on this visit he will take with him a load of *chi*. He will go to some neighbouring house—never the house where the girl herself lives—and will discover what man of the village is acting as the girl's *bek-bu*; to this man he will give the load of *chi* and start negotiations for the marriage. The girl's *bek-bu* will discuss the proposition with the girl's family—particularly her uncles—but the father and mother are also unofficially consulted. As a matter of form the girl's family will belittle the match on the first conversation, saying that they do not wish yet to get rid of their daughter, that the proposed match is not good enough, and so on. If they do not know the boy proposed they will send to make enquiries about his character, as to whether he is a good and industrious worker, peaceable and generous. The girl's family will always refuse at the first discussion and usually at the second; if they have not agreed when the subject is broached for the third time the negotiations are called off. If they do agree the *bek-bu* will present them with a ceremonial scarf and a rupee and a date will be set for the formal *asék*, dependent on the lama's horoscope not being completely unfavourable. This preliminary is called *kachyoong*.

583 For *asék* considerable gifts are demanded, and these are called 'the price of the bride'. These gifts do not actually represent the chief expense of the marriage—that is involved in the marriage feast—but they are articles which are not consumed in common but which are given over to the family of the girl. After these gifts have been accepted the marriage is considered to be legitimatised, even though the groom has not brought his bride home; children born after *asék* are fully legitimate, and if the betrothal is broken, either the gifts or their equivalent in money must be returned, or another girl provided as substitute. The *asék* gifts consist of two

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pigs, a large copper pot, or in lieu of it Rs. 20 for the girl's father, a length of fine cloth, or in lieu Rs. 13 (formerly Rs. 20) for the mother, Rs. 3 for the bride, and a ceremonial scarf and a rupee for the girl's *bek-bu*.

When these gifts have been collected, they are consecrated by a special Mun ritual in the groom's house before being taken to the girl's family. If the house contains a lamaist altar this is decorated and *chimi* are lit, and the offerings placed before it, the disembowelled pigs in front, and behind the copper pot with the other gifts on top of it. An officiant is needed to consecrate the gifts; it is preferable that the 'sacrificer', the *rum-faat-bu*, should be a Mun, but it can also be performed by any old and experienced layman with the necessary qualification. Incense is burned, *chi* from a buttered cup and rice offered, and a long invocation is made to the gods to bless the marriage and make it fruitful; besides the personal and *ptso* supernaturals of the groom special emphasis is placed on the appeal to Komsi*thing* and Tarbong-bo, who are involved in the original institution of marriage.[2] After the consecration a ceremonial meal of rice and sausages made from the pig's intestines is eaten, and the groom then sets off with his *bek-bu* and three men to carry the presents. The carriers should be ideally a paternal uncle, a maternal uncle and an elder brother; failing them, people standing in a similar position are employed.

At this visit the groom and his party usually stop three or four days at the girl's house. The two betrothed are meant to keep together, sitting by one another and feeding one another, and to sleep side by side. At this initial meeting the attention of all the elders is concentrated on noticing the way the two young people behave towards one another; because of this attention, and on account of the general situation, the young couple are usually in an agony of self-conscious shame and can hardly bear to look at or speak to one another.

After this initial visit the *asék* party returns home, but a few days later the groom makes a second visit, taking with him a gift of meat and usually accompanied by an uncle. At this visit the young couple, if they are of a suitable age, are meant to copulate together, and their uncles are meant to supervise this operation to make sure it takes place; if they do not, the one who refuses to do so—and it is considered equally likely that the refuser will be the boy or the girl—will be severely admonished and may be thrashed by

[2] See Appendix IV. The Sacred Story of the Origin of Marriage.

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583 his or her uncle to make him like his partner. For if the two do not
584 sleep together the girl will not be able to 'lighten her mothers' shoulder' (that is, help her mother-in-law), and the boy will shame his parents and all the expense that the parents have been put to will be wasted. Moreover, should the couple separate, the girl's family will be blamed for not seeing that they made love.

584 This is another situation in which the Lepchas' formulation of ideal behaviour differs very considerably from their practice. Betrothal is very often a period of great emotional stress, especially for the girl who will energetically refuse to have anything to do with her proposed husband. In all the cases that came to my notice of betrothed couples getting on badly together the pair had never achieved copulation and the older Lepchas in referring to these situations always stated that the difficulties would be got over if the pair slept together—a statement which seems to be borne out by experience. But just because the girls also hold this belief they repulse their husbands with even greater energy; I am almost certain that this repulsion is actuated not by physical or emotional distaste for the husband but by a deep-seated fear of leaving their family and their surroundings. In such situations the Lepcha theory calls for physical punishment of the recalcitrant party, but Lepcha practice makes such behaviour very unpleasant. The result is a good deal of threatenings and grumblings and no actions at all. In such situations those adults not directly responsible for the behaviour of the children are full of loud talk as to the energetic steps which should be taken; the responsible adults are full of excuses for putting off the crisis until another occasion.

In Lingthem in 1937 there were five boys or young men who were *asék*'d and three who had only had their wives home a few weeks or months. Of these, three had had very stormy betrothals in which the hostility had lasted for several years. In one case, that of Nariya, who was thirty years old (he had been married earlier but the marriage had broken down because of the girl's promiscuity followed by her running away with all the available valuables and cash), this hostility continued even after the performance of the marriage feast and a peaceful settlement only approached during the last days of my stay there. Nariya's wife was fourteen, a large overgrown girl. After three years' betrothal the marriage feast was
593 celebrated in the late autumn of 1936. Immediately after the
585 marriage the girl returned home and refused to have anything to do with her husband, saying: 'I do not want to see your face,' and

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MIKMAR AND CHIMPET PLAYING

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MIKMAR GOES OFF WITH THE *ASÉK* GIFTS TO SEE HIS NEWLY AFFIANCED BRIDE, WHOM HE DOESN'T KNOW

He is wearing his best clothes. With him are on the left Gongyop's son, with the pig on his back, and Kurma's nephew Takshyom holding a lantern, and with the copper bowl on his back; on the right Chinya, Mikmar's "paternal uncle" (really his second cousin once removed) and Chala Mandal, who is *bek-bu*. The wife lives two days' journey away. On the fence are reeds which have been bent when green drying for thatch.

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593 adopted brother, and Kutt'r were now getting on all right with their
586 wives after a preliminary period of conflict in each case lasting about four years. Kutt'r who was eighteen years old was married at the age of fourteen to a wife one month after *asék*, before which he had never met her. She had only come to live with him in the last few months. First of all they disliked one another thoroughly; then by the pressure of their families they were brought to sleep together but did not do anything. Only in the last two or three months have they copulated together; now they like one another.

585 Gongyop's son was born in 1919; he is a very girlish-looking and under-developed boy and preternaturally shy; it will be remembered that he was drinking his mother's milk up to the age of ten. Before *asék* he did not know his wife; *asék* took place about six months ago. The girl is older and bigger than he and at first he was frightened of her, though she spoke nicely to him. On May 19th he returned from his third visit to her at which they had slept together. He came home with a look on his face like a cat which had just been fed on cream and seemed rather proud of himself; he said that now he likes his wife. Datoop's younger son was *asék* by proxy for his elder brother Pichi; but Pichi at the beginning of May definitely refused the marriage and instead the youngest son was going to marry the girl. On May 9th he went off with his father to pay a visit to his bride. I asked the boy what present he was taking to his parents-in-law, at which his father replied 'His present is between his legs'. He was, however, also taking a leg of meat with him. Datoop hoped that, if the harvest was good, the girl would be brought home in the autumn.

On March 19th Mikmar, Chano's eldest son, aged thirteen, was *asék*'d to an unknown girl three or four years older than himself. By May 9th he had paid the girl three visits. They are patently unable to sleep together for Mikmar is still very childish, but they get on well enough together and give each other food.

584 In Lingthem there were only four unmarried girls over the age of twelve; of these Prumtu, the girl with the squint, is likely to wait some time before marrying and Tafoor's eldest daughter has only just passed twelve and has not yet been asked for. The other two girls are the two eldest daughters of Pargetu, aged sixteen and twelve respectively; they have been *asék*'d to two brothers. The
593 younger girl, Tangvoong, gets on well enough with her young husband, but the older one, Kondé, does not; the two both fight

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like cat and dog. This girl had a very unpleasant eruption of boils all over her face and I saw a great deal of her because she used to come up every third day to have her boils dressed; they were cured before I left. According to Tafoor, who is a very distant sort of uncle, the girl got her boils from a devil which was brought by her husband with the *asék* presents. She does not like her husband, and has so far refused to sleep with him (or, Tafoor thinks, anybody else). Tafoor considers that the fault really lies with the husband, who should have forced her to sleep with him when she came to his house; he did not, probably because he was ashamed. If she persists in not liking him she will be spoken to and given a beating to make her; it is simply naughtiness on her part.

During my stay in Lingthem Kondé was taken to visit her prospective husband once and the husband came also twice to her house to help her parents work. The situation did not develop in any way. Kondé had got set into an attitude of rebellious mutism in which she refused to do anything or to speak to anybody unless it was absolutely necessary. The only person who seemed to have any influence with her was Mrs. Datoop, who was a distant 'aunt by marriage'. Her attitude was completely mulish; so to speak, she dug in her feet and put back her ears and refused to budge. She showed no preference for anybody other than her betrothed; her attitude was entirely negative, she did not want to marry and especially not to marry the man provided for her. When she addressed him she used to use the childish abusive phrases, which have normally been abandoned and forgotten by people of her age. Kondé was a good and industrious girl and a considerable help to her parents, but she did not and would not get married. It was, I think, much more the fear of separation from her parents and home, even though she would be accompanied by a younger sister, which motivated her refusal, rather than actual dislike of her husband, who chiefly personified exile.

These examples will show that in about half the cases of betrothal there is considerable hostility on the part of the girl. For the girl marriage means nearly always geographical separation from her family—almost a second weaning—and many of them do not face this prospect cheerfully. This psychological disturbance cannot by any means be equated with puberty for betrothal may take place at any age from eight upwards. It is an intellectual and not a physical disturbance. It seems to me very probable that it is the successful overcoming of this second weaning which gives to young

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584 women so much more self-assurance than young men of similar age possess.

Occasionally the hostility to the marriage comes from the young man, but except in the rare cases where a boy is betrothed to a woman—the Lepchas do not regard disparity of age and in several marriages the wife is four or five years older than her husband—opposition is personal and not emotional. It is that particular girl which the boy dislikes, very often because he has already choser. somebody else whom he prefers. Aplung refused his wife (who was subsequently married to Rigya) because he wanted to marry Tobgé's stepmother, a woman considerably older than himself. When young men do choose wives for themselves they seem almost always to chose mature women. In the case of young boys who are *asék* to older women or who inherit them as levirate spouses the hostility is to marriage and sex as such. They simply have no desire for marriage yet. Thus, Chélé refused, or tried to refuse, to have anything to do with the wife he inherited from an uncle, and Itup, Takneum's son, refused to have anything to do with the wife he inherited when he was ten.

Although all the boys that I talked to very much wanted to be grown up, they displayed an almost uniform lack of interest in marriage. The only boy who said that he wanted to get married was Ribu, aged twelve; and he said he wanted to get married so as to have somebody to help him in the fields. In his particular case extra help was welcome and necessary; the household consisted of two old widowed grandmothers, a widowed mother, and an elder brother Patek, aged seventeen, and his wife; the proportion of dependents to adult workers was particularly adverse. With the exception of Chélé all the boys over ten wanted very much to grow up, and especially to achieve complete sexual potency 'so as to be able to —— the girls properly', but marriage as such was considered as an inevitable but not particularly desirable condition of full adulthood. Chimpet based the adolescent attitude of marriage neatly in the antithesis that (*a*) marriage is a great waste of money and animals and (*b*) if you don't get married and sleep with other men's wives you will be fined.

For boys betrothal is a much more actively disagreeable time than for girls. Between *asék* and the marriage feast the groom is in a more openly dependent and humiliating position than at any other period of his life. His parents-in-law have powers of compulsion and shame over him which his own parents do not possess; he

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has to visit his parents-in-law and help them with their work whenever he is summoned; incapacitating illness is the only acceptable excuse for refusing a father-in-law's order; neither personal nor family interests may stand in the way. When he is in his father-in-law's house the groom is under considerable restraint; he must be modest and circumspect in his language and behaviour and must be consistently respectful to his bride's parents and elder siblings. His wife's brothers have considerable licence to tease him and to use obscene language to him; he must on no account retort in kind; if he were to do so he would be shamed. Though his bedding is placed beside that of his bride he can only copulate with her in semi-secrecy; he has to wait until he is certain that everybody else is sound asleep, or otherwise he would be considered shameless. Even if he is on friendly terms with his bride his visits to her home are periods of constraint and humiliation; if, as so often happens, they disagree, these visits are likely to be the most positively unpleasant circumstances in his whole life. A groom can only leave his wife's family at the express permission of his father-in-law. 584

This period of semi-servitude is felt to be extremely disagreeable; but it is also considered inevitable, and no attempt is made to sidestep it. For the parents of the groom this service with the father-in-law is to a great extent considered as the continuance and finishing of the process of education which started when the child achieved physical independence. Their attitude could, I think, be paralleled with that of English middle-class parents who send their sons away to boarding school; they realise that the boys will be less happy than they would be at home but they consider it an inevitable stage in the attainment of full adulthood.

During the period of *aték* the groom spends about half his time with his parents-in-law. The length of each individual stay depends on the distance between the two villages; if the two houses are not more than a day's journey apart about a week will be spent alternatively in each; if they are farther away, about a month. The period of *aték* varies considerably, according to the wealth and inclination of the groom's parents; marriage may be performed one month after *aték* or there may be an interval of several years; the average period is about eighteen months. It is also necessary that the lamas find an auspicious day for the marriage from their horoscope books, but that does not usually entail a delay of more than a few weeks.

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584 Betrothal does not by any means necessarily imply sexual connection between the betrothed. It does, however, usually indicate the commencement of sexual activity for both parties, and almost always for the boys. The majority of Lepcha men receive their sexual initiation and education from a potential levirate spouse—the wife of an 'elder brother' or 'uncle'—and very often at the woman's direct invitation. It is a Lepcha axiom that women never make the first advances and most people repeat this statement; but a number of men when recounting their own early sex experiences tell of direct invitation and solicitation from these potential spouses; timid Jiroong indeed was at the age of fifteen as nearly raped as it is possible for a man to be by his elder brother's wife. Fathers instruct their sons as to the women they have a right to sleep with, and the women whom, though potentially heritable, they must avoid because their fathers have already slept with them.[3] Elder brothers, too, on their marriage give their younger brothers formal permission to sleep with their wives. These legitimate copulations must be practised discreetly and nearly always take place during the temporary absence of the real spouse. It is considered desirable that a boy should first sleep with a woman older than himself so as to be taught how to do it properly. For the Lepchas there is nothing incongruous in a man sleeping with a woman twice his age, and it would seem indeed that young men find older women more attractive; in the few cases where a young man has been able to choose his own bride they have always chosen elder women. It has already been remarked that fully grown younger brothers transfer many of their attitudes towards their fathers to their elder brothers; I find it, however, impossible to gauge to what extent if any the elder brothers' wives are equated with the mothers.

833 836 Although the great majority of men receive their sexual initiation from an elder sister-in-law, a few have their first experience with contemporaries. Thus Chimpet has twice slept with a girl of his own age at Parfok at her invitation; he enjoyed the experience and would like to repeat it, but does not want to marry the girl because he does not like her. Similarly Rigya was seduced at the age of fifteen by a girl of the same age in a neighbouring village;

[3] See Chapter Six, p. 153.

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(*b*) Marriage Horoscopes

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Forecast of marriage of Tafoor. Tiger and Water year, and his wife, Horse and Fire year.

O X wife will die before husband
O O both will have good health
O
O O They will have many children
O X their property will be moderate only
X X they will have short lives
O X if his wife is ill he will be able to help her.

For another marriage, the man Dog year and Iron year, the woman Ox year and Water year.

O
O O both will live long
X
X O but their health will be indifferent
O O they will be very rich
O O exorcism will be successful for them
X but their children will die.

(*c*) Death Horoscope

787

(This is also an imaginary horoscope for a man aged seventy-three and therefore *kalok nam*—Rat year—dying on Sunday, 16th May.)

Sooksa dyeu adum nyetka mak—time of death. Died from being given *chip-tsok*—unclean food. His soul is being eaten by Tseng and Gebu supernaturals. Before his death there was an evil sign such as a python in the house or a cock crowing at night, or a big tree falling tip towards the house, or a fireplace falling through on to the earth.

Lyoo deu anok kat (' The lake of his soul was dry '). Much property was expended over his illness. His death was caused by his failing to give a feast. One sister was his enemy and made him either quarrel or go to war.

Ongtong lyoo adum nyet. At the end of his life there was a quarrel between Kado Palor *rum* and Deut *moong* for his soul, whether he should be allowed to live or die. Tamseu Pongseu *moong* took his soul away and gave it to Tongry-oong *moong*, who is like a tiger, to eat. At the time of his death he was thinking about his youngest son.

Loongto dyeu adum nyet. Either he had been given a red cloth or a piece of meat, or he had been given a black hat by a Mun ku-man-bu (sorcerer); this made unhappy Palor *rum* and therefore the *moong* took his soul. He was pre-occupied about his male relations on the father's side; therefore these people should perform for him the ceremony of Karbo Tookdeu Klon (a white *deu* on a *pong-ring*).

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was married off to another man, but the Dorje-Lopön was made to refund the original marriage price. He was, however, given the custody of his son Datoop, now a man of fifty, and one of the leading lights in the Lingtem monastery. As a child Datoop lived sometimes with his father and sometimes with his mother, who had now married the headman of a nearby village. It seemed as though the Dorje-Lopön would now settle down to respectable married life; but in the course of his wanderings he one day discovered an attractive young girl in a neighbouring village. Chapshay was her name, and almost at once he deserted his wife and went to live at the home of his new friend's parents, only coming to Lingtem for the purpose of attending periodical ceremonies at the monastery. After a time Chapshay's parents tired of the situation and suggested that the Dorje-Lopön might at least regularise his position. To this he consented; and accordingly presented them with the necessary carcass of a pig. While he was still living with Chapshay he one day espied her niece, with whom he instantly fell in love. It was a mere matter of months for him to make Atyok pregnant; and when this occurred her parents forced him to do the ceremony known as *Tip-song*, in order that she should not give birth to a bastard. This was followed by marriage. For some time the three lived together at Chapshay's home, the Dorje-Lopön still coming to Lingtem from time to time. In those days, before the present building had been erected, the main door of the monastery faced towards the east. There was but one big prayer-drum, and it was housed in a separate little building known as the *Hla-gong*. Living in Lingtem at the time was one Jiroong, whose wife, a woman much older than he, was also an Inebu. She had already been married before going to live with Jiroong, but her former husband and all his near relations were dead. She was not attractive; but since Jiroong's parents were too poor to obtain a better wife for him he was forced to submit. Jiroong's wife was in charge of the *Hla-gong*, which meant that she was often about in the monastery; and in those days

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Pemba is Datoop's eldest son and is now twenty-seven, his wife being four years younger. He had already started his Lama's training when he was summoned to work in Gangtok. He remained at the palace for nearly ten years, when he left the Maharaja's service at his own request. Like his friend Chodu, he too was a scullion. When he was in Gangtok he learnt to wear boots and as a result still has very tender feet. His mother says that he was not weaned early; and perhaps because of this he was a very nervous child. We often noticed that he flinched at any sudden noise, and even now he says he cannot bear the sight of blood. He used to cry a lot when he first left home, but after his return on leave he soon found that he wanted to go back to Gangtok again. His parents told me they were very anxious while he was away from home and always used to visit him once a year. He was sometimes beaten as a child and would threaten to throw himself in the fire; but his parents would only laugh, and told him that if he really wished to die they would not prevent him. Although he still is rather nervous, and much more retiring than the average Lepcha, he does not appear to be in any way maladjusted. He is completely bilingual, speaking Nepali almost as well as his own language.

Pichi, aged twenty-three, is Datoop's second son. He has just returned from Gangtok, where he has spent the last eight years or so learning to be a carpenter. While he was still away from home his parents decided that it was time for him to be betrothed; but he sent back word that he was too busy to leave his work. For this reason his brother, a boy of fifteen, acted as his proxy at the ceremony. When Pichi came home the following year he at once made it clear that he had no intention of proceeding with this prearranged marriage, and said that when he wished to marry he would choose a wife for himself. The Mandal, who made all the arrangements, was somewhat perplexed at this state of affairs, such a case never having arisen before. He now thinks that in order not to cause offence the best thing is

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As a matter of fact, Datoop's wife has never exercised her powers. Although she is such a commanding personality, everybody likes her; and we often heard of her going out of the way to lend a helping hand to others.

* * * * *

The Inebu Dorje Lopön is a widow of sixty-two and lives alone with her adopted son, having had no children of her own. Although the official leader of the women, she can neither read nor write, and has turned up to-day, the 10th of April, in ignorance of the fact that no ceremony will take place for another two days. Her husband, who died many years ago, was a layman. After they had been married for some years she persuaded him to take her niece as a second wife. This he did; but she too was childless. The Dorje Lopön liked having a co-wife, because it made her housework very much lighter. The husband used to spend alternate nights with his two wives, but this was never a cause of quarrels. She thinks that for women the period immediately after marriage is the happiest time of life. Both men and women begin to get old at sixty; but even so, if she had a husband she would still enjoy sleeping with him. She did not actually remain faithful to her husband's memory; but has now ceased to be interested in the cares of the flesh. Her adopted son is the child of her elder brother. This boy, who was betrothed a few months ago, and will be married next year, is at present living at the home of his future bride. The Mandal arranged the match, and since the Dorje Lopön has very little money of her own friends have subscribed towards the marriage expenses; but the boy's own father has paid a considerable part. Suspended from her necklace she always wore the broken head of a small china stag, of the type one can buy in the street for a penny. She had acquired this beast many years ago, and when it broke had kept its head, which she regarded as some sort of miraculous charm. We never saw her without it.

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utstanding physique; for Chala's mother, when she was an old woman, later told her son that she was terrified at their first encounter. He seems also to have been noted for his promiscuity, a trait which Chala has himself inherited.

In addition to his official duties the Mandal gives much thought to the arrangement of local marriages. He has been doing this for so many years that he has now come to think of young people principally in terms of their suitability as possible marriage partners. He has so far acted as go-between for no less than sixty couples, and nowadays nobody ever thinks of asking anyone else to undertake this duty. In these cases he is called in not as village headman, but merely as an experienced member of the community whose opinion is trusted. His duties as Mandal, however, take him frequently to all the surrounding villages, and since he is on intimate terms with everybody, he is always in a position to make suggestions. Many marriages are of course settled by the families or individuals concerned; but even in cases such as these certain formal arrangements are later thought to be necessary. The ordinary man does not kn[illegible] the correct form of speech proper to such occasions, and for this reason the Mandal's services are still in much demand.

The Mandal's knowledge of his district is encyclopædic, and although he can neither read nor write he is able to quote without hesitation or mistake details of local administration which one would normally expect to find only in a book of statistics. He is slightly ashamed of being illiterate, but does not realise that his memory is quite extraordinary. He never smokes, and drinks less than others because he has to remember everything "in his heart and belly," as the saying is, and might otherwise forget. Because he was ill and lived a long way away we did not see a great deal of him, but on the few occasions when he came to the monastery his great delight was to sit on a chair. The only ones we had were of the camp variety; and having been with me all over the Himalayas were in the last stages of disrepair, and liable to fall to pieces at any moment. To the

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597 A childless couple nearly always adopt a child, usually that of some near relation. It often happens that a woman gives birth to a child of her own a few years after she and her husband have already adopted one. An adopted son is better than none; but there is no doubt that the practice is to a great extent resorted to in the hope of getting a child of one's own. This belief is so common that even among Lepcha Christians in the Gangtok district (so Miss Scott tells me) it is common for people to adopt a child temporarily, on the understanding that it is returned to its parents as soon as the adopting mother gives birth to a child of her own. In Jongu, however, the adopted child [428] does not normally return to its own parents and remains the legal heir of its adopting father, even should he later have a son of his own.

883 Of adolescence there is little to be said except that it does 831 not seem to result in psychological disturbance such as is common in our society. But there is, of course, here no [521] sexual repression at any time of life. Sex is, indeed, almost the people's sole recreation, and the most common topic of conversation on practically every occasion. This state of affairs is more commonly associated with a society such as our own, in which sexual experience is, to a great extent, denied to the young. One would not expect to find it in a primitive culture in which at no time is there the slightest difficulty in indulging in sex to the body's content. It should [212 be realised, however, that the Lepchas have no mental 535] occupation whatsoever. They do not read; they do not even dance, except on rare ceremonial occasions, and once the day's work in the fields is done there is only drinking and sex. Whether this is or is not a desirable state of affairs I leave it to the reader to judge; but at least the people are free from the evils which undoubtedly result from the unfulfilled desires aroused by the erotic stimulation of the cinema and such-like shows.

582 Marriage usually takes place between the ages of fifteen 584 and twenty, and is generally arranged by the parents of the

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boy and girl concerned. The children are, however, consulted and are never forced to marry against their will; but at this age they do not seem to have any very strong likes or dislikes, and seem usually willing to marry anyone whom their parents suggest. I do not think the question of love ever arises, and am personally doubtful whether such a state of mind is known to the Lepcha; but the reasons for this will be more fully discussed in the following chapter. There is a tendency, however, for boys who go away from home to work to insist on choosing their own partners, and to delay their marriage until a somewhat later age than the normal. There are, of course, not many such; but under the feudal system prevailing each village has, according to the size of its population, to provide a boy or two either for service in the Palace at Gangtok or for training in the State Carpentry School. These boys are usually away from home between, roughly, the ages of twelve and twenty, but some prefer to stay on. They seem to find it a little difficult to fit into the scheme of village life when they first return, but in Lingtem there was no apparent case of a boy being permanently maladjusted on this account. They settle down quite comfortably after the first few months and are probably better, in the long run, for the additional experience. Most of them learn to speak Nepali, and one or two can read and write a little. The system has much to commend it, and enables the Maharaja to keep in personal touch with his tenants. This would otherwise be impossible, since a personal visit to Jongu, Lepcha hospitality being what it is, would be too much of a drain on the district's resources. This His Highness fully realises, and wisely keeps away.

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I should say that "being in love" is a state of mind completely unknown to the Lepchas. There was not in Lingtem, so far as I know, a single instance of a man or woman making a love-match; nor do I think such a thing possible in a society completely devoid of jealousy. It is interesting, however, to note that among Christian Lepchas in Kalimpong and Darjeeling real love-matches are very common and becoming the usual thing among the younger generation: and we have also seen that there is a tendency among such "uncivilised" Lepchas as have worked in Gangtok to make at least some attempt to arrange their own marriages. It should be remembered, however, that in both these cases the free sexual life of the "uncivilised" Lepcha is impossible; in the one case only temporarily, but in the other by reason of a permanently changed code of morals. Can it be that as a result of these changed conditions the "inherent" but previously sublimated jealousy comes to the surface, at the same time bringing with it the ability to enjoy the "most exalted of human experiences"? I do not know; but, to me, it seems not impossible.

In view of the fact that there is no privacy in a Lepcha house, children are early aware of the method of procreation, and it is a common sight at monastery feasts to see small children of four or five imitating the act of copulation, and not infrequently being egged on by their inebriated elders, who seem to think this an amusing sight. Boys generally commence their sexual life at about the age of twelve, and usually start by being seduced by one of their father's younger brother's wives, if any such are living in the same house. We can now realise that the regulation prohibiting a man from having sexual relations with the wives of his father's *elder* brothers has a definite purpose, since the father himself is permitted to sleep with these women. Were the prohibition not enforced it would be possible for both a father and son to have sexual relations with the same woman, a state of affairs that is looked upon with marked disapproval, although it is not considered to be actually incestuous.

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585 This story is always told at Lepcha weddings, at the time the animal sacrifice is made, and explains why a copper pot, pig, and other articles always form part of the marriage gifts. It was told me by the Mandal, who learnt it from his father when he was a young man. It is known to all Muns, but not by many "ordinary" people.

584 [576] When it is wished to arrange a marriage the parents of the boy concerned must first send for a *Pi-bo*, or go-between, as it is not etiquette to conduct the preliminaries in person. The meaning of this word is literally "a nicely-spoken person," which, in view of the use made of elegant periphrases during the course of the actual marriage ceremonies, well describes the duties of the office. The *Pi-bo* may be any suitable experienced man; but in actual practice, in Lingtem, it is nearly always the Mandal.

584 431 The parents now prepare a special ceremonial gift known as *Khachyong*, which consists of eight pounds of fermented chi-millet, one rupee, and a Tibetan ceremonial scarf. If the last is not available six annas in cash may be sent in its place.

584 The *Khachyong* is taken by the boy's *Pi-bo* to the house of some near relative of the selected girl, usually to a brother of one or other of her parents; but in no circumstances may it be presented to the girl's parents direct. Having arrived at the village the *Pi-bo* ascertains from the girl's relative who will act as her go-between, after which the two men visit him and hand over the *Khachyong*. In return for this present the girl's *Pi-bo* promises to see what he can do in the matter, and the boy's representative then returns to his own home. All this, of course, is a mere formality, since in most cases it has been previously ascertained, perhaps years before, that the proposed marriage is acceptable to all concerned.

The girl's *Pi-bo* keeps the chi-millet for himself, but takes the rupee and the scarf to the girl's parents and discusses the proposed marriage with them. It is the custom for them at first to refuse, giving as excuse that the boy is too poor, or not of good enough family. The *Pi-bo* continues to plead with them, and if unsuccessful in gaining their consent he returns

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again the next day. If he is still unable to move them he returns a third time; and if he cannot persuade them on this last occasion the matter is finally dropped, and the presents returned to the boy's *Pi-bo;* but this does not often happen.

If the girl's parents agree to the marriage they send for a Lama and ask him to work out the auspicious date for the *Ashyek*, or formal betrothal, to take place, after which the girl's go-between informs the boy, through his *Pi-bo*, that he should come on such-and-such a day. On the appointed day the boy, accompanied by his *Pi-bo*, sets out for the girl's home. They take with them one large copper pot (or twenty rupees in cash), sufficient cloth to make a dress for the girl's mother (or thirteen rupees in cash), and a *Gyachung* of three rupees. It appears that the *Gyachung* was originally a piece of cloth specially woven by the women of the boy's household; but since these are no longer made in Jongu the three rupees are given instead. To the above are added two pigs' carcases; but poorer people give only one.

All these presents are taken direct to the girl's home. When the party arrives the girl's parents ask why they have come. There is an exchange of compliments, followed by general conversation, after which the girl's parents usually say that while they are really unwilling for their daughter to marry perhaps it would be as well, after all, to let the matter go forward. They then present the boy's *Pi-bo* with one dead fowl, one rupee and a ceremonial scarf: all these he keeps for himself. This completes the betrothal, and the boy then returns to his own home.

One week later the boy goes alone to the girl's home, taking with him a present of one bullock's leg, which he presents to his future parents-in-law. He stays in the house for ten days and during this time he is expected to have sexual intercourse with his future bride; and the girl's father watches carefully to see that he does so. So important is this considered that the girl's father will, if necessary, beat the boy in order to make him co-operate. This, however, is only necessary with very young boys who have had no previous

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●584 sexual experience; or in a case where a particularly shy boy is being betrothed to some girl with whom he was previously unacquainted.

At the end of the ten days the boy returns to his own home; but he is now at liberty to visit the girl whenever he wishes. He usually goes to stay with her from time to time, and also brings her to his own home whenever it is convenient. This gradual weaning of the girl from her parents seems to me an admirable arrangement, for when the time comes for her to leave home finally there is no psychological wrench: she has already been able to adjust herself gradually to the new state of affairs. Even after marriage it is usual for a girl to go back to her parents from time to time, so that unless she has married into a very distant village she is at no time completely cut off from them.

There are no ceremonies intervening between betrothal and marriage, and the interval between the two is entirely dependent upon the wealth of the bridegroom's family. Provided that money and food are available for the necessary feasts the marriage can take place on the first auspicious day after betrothal: on the other hand it may be deferred for years if necessary; and may even never take place at all.

[848] Once the pair have been formally betrothed there is no objection to their having children, since such are considered to be in every respect legitimate.

585 The actual day for the marriage is determined by a Lama, and a few days previously the boy escorts the girl back to her own home, should she happen not to be living there at the time. On the day before the wedding the bridegroom, together with his attendants, sets out to bring the bride to his own home, the whole party being known as *Nyom le-bu*. In addition to the bridegroom himself, it consists of his *Pi-bo*, one or other of his paternal uncles, and a boy friend known as *Myok tyol*, who is a sort of best man. They take with them one leg of pork and one rupee and six annas in cash. The six annas is known as *Sarong chut*. If this is not paid the women of the girl's household will rush out and attack the men with

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587 but the party was continued until dawn the next day. Since this was not a first marriage the full three-day festivities were not carried out: nor will Ongden and his bride make the usual ceremonial visit to her people. In this particular case there was, I gather, really no need for him to have done any ceremony except the formal betrothal; but since he is
554 a man of standing in the village he has preferred to do things properly. In any case, no Lepcha will miss the opportunity of throwing a party, provided the necessary funds are available.

15th March:

A number of "corpses" lying about under the bushes. Most of these had removed themselves by nightfall.

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583 Before betrothal a boy usually does a certain amount of work for his future father-in-law, and may even stay in his house should he happen to live in the same village. This service is entirely voluntary and is in no sense looked upon as payment for the bride. After the formal betrothal has taken place, however, the girl's parents can call upon the boy's services for a period of three years; but if the marriage takes place within this period the obligation ceases.

591 When a man has a daughter and no sons he arranges, if
584 possible, that his son-in-law shall live in his house, in which case the boy becomes what is known as a *Komok myok*. In these circumstances he is treated exactly as though he were the real son of the house, except that he has a less hard time. It is not always easy for a man to obtain a *Komok myok* for his daughter; for unless such a boy has several brothers his father will not normally wish to lose him, since it means that he will have no one to help him work his own fields.

431 When a man is so poor that he cannot afford even the
585 minimum marriage gifts everyone in the village helps him. This is looked upon as a gift and is not repayable. It is,

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of course, in addition to the actual cash contributed by the guests at the *Ong kay* already described.

There is a modified form of betrothal ceremony known as *Ah-kut*, which is done by people who cannot afford the full *Ashyek* payments. It consists in the presentation of one pig's carcass to the bride's parents. No one would willingly be married by means of *Ah-kut*, which may be compared with our marriage by Registrar, if he could possibly afford to carry out the full ceremony, for it is a point of honour with Lepchas to entertain one's friends to the full limit of one's purse; and a failure to do so, should funds be available, would be to stamp oneself as a mean fellow and a bad co-operator. *Ah-kut*, however, constitutes full legal marriage, and no further ceremony is necessary.

Except for the additional wives a man may acquire by inheritance Lepchas do not normally marry a second wife unless the first proves to be childless. The custom of marrying additional wives would appear to be an importation, probably through contact with Nepalis, for the language does not contain any specific word to denote a second wife, the Nepali word *Kanchi* being commonly used for this purpose. I am, of course, aware that it is dangerous to base an hypothesis of this sort on linguistic evidence alone; but it is significant that in other parts of Sikkim and adjacent British India Lepchas are monogamous except for the additional wives some acquire by inheritance.

In Jongu it appears that a childless woman nearly always induces her husband to marry again. If possible he will take one of his first wife's sisters, or possibly a niece; but in any case he should try and obtain some sort of relative of his wife, since this arrangement is thought to cause less domestic friction than might otherwise be the case. It sometimes happens, however, that a man decides to remarry without reference to his first wife (as in the case of Aga, for instance), in which case the new wife must give a present, known as *Thim seut*. It does not take any special form. The new wife should also give something to the eldest child of the first wife.